

CONFLATING CHURCH AND STATE

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INTRODUCTION

- Grew up in a strongly nationalistic home, church, and area
- Syncretistic Christianity
- Analyze historic examples of church-state conflation
- Build an argument for separation

PROLEGOMENA

- Church and state attempt to answer similar questions
- Historically the boundary has been quite undefined
- Freedom of religion as a human right?
- Christians?

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

BACKGROUND

- Political/religious tension between colonies and Great Britain
- Colonists wanted freedom (taxation, government, religion)
- Some church resistance, but mostly support

WHAT HAPPENED

- War was waged on the grounds of those desired freedoms
- Many Christians actively participated and supported the war
- A sense of nationalistic pride was developing among the colonists

BIBLICAL CONTROVERSY

- Romans 13:1-7
- Hebrews 13:7-17
- Titus 3:1-11

COUNTERPOINT

- Religious leaders in the colonies also used the Bible to support the war
 - Daniel
 - Moses
 - Apostles (Acts 4-5)

SUMMARY

- Each example was non-violent on behalf of the people
- Consider Jesus during his time period
- If the church and state are combined, there can be no submission

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

BACKGROUND

- 313 - Christianity made legal in the Roman Empire
- 380 – Christianity becomes the state religion
- 800 – Pope Leo III crowns Charlemagne as Emperor

WHAT HAPPENED

- Heretics exiled/killed
- Crusades
- Hierarchy between laity and priesthood
 - No real “middle class”

BIBLICAL CONTROVERSY

- John 18:33-40
- Jude 1:20-25
- Matthew 26:47-56

COUNTERPOINT

- The Hebrews conquered lands in the name of God, so we should do the same
- Ephesians 6:10-17
- 2 Peter 2

SUMMARY

- Jesus does not support violence between people
- Conflated church and state led to years of religious oppression
- Suffering is integral to the Christian faith, not causing it

CONCLUSION

- “The conflation of church and state leads to many negative consequences (mostly unintended) for both the common people, leaders, and Christianity as a whole. Several of these consequences have been referenced in this presentation. It appears that Christianity was not intended to be a state religion, because of the importance of submission, suffering, and being “salt.”

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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